

**A CALCULATED RELATIONSHIP:
RAFAEL CORREA AND THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT**

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ABSTRACT

A Calculated Relationship:
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This thesis examines the nature of the alliance formed between President Rafael Correa and the Ecuadorian indigenous movement that led to the incorporation of plurinationalism into the 2008 Constitution. To this end, this analysis frames the push for a new constitution that occurred between 2006 and 2008 within the larger historical relationship between the indigenous movement and the Ecuadorian presidency. The trajectory of this this relationship reveals how the indigenous movement's extensive experience with presidential politics made it skeptical of Rafael Correa's promises, and consequently ended the possibility of an electoral coalition with him in 2006. It also brings to light how the three presidential overthrows between 1997 and 2005 forced President Correa into a mutualistic relationship with the indigenous movement in order to stabilize the nation and secure his tenure as president. By analyzing the political climate between 2006 and 2008 as a product of its history, this thesis accurately presents the Correa-indigenous alliance as a mutualistic relationship between two opposing forces with different agendas.

INTRODUCTION

On April 24, 1992, over ten thousand indigenous people marched from the Amazon to Quito, Ecuador. After entering the heart of Ecuadorian society, the marchers congregated in the city's historic plaza to petition the government. With the eyes of the nation upon them, the indigenous people from the Amazon demanded a constitutional reform to transform Ecuador into a plurinational state. This mass exodus, which is now famously known as the *Caminata* (the Walk), began the road to plurinationalism in Ecuador.

After fifteen years of unwavering advocacy, the indigenous movement succeeded in officially transforming Ecuador into a plurinational state with the ratification of the 2008 Constitution. The progressive nature of the nation's charter garnered this watershed moment international appraisal. In celebratory spirit, the newly elected Ecuadorian president Rafael Vicente Correa proclaimed that a new nation had been born.¹ Eight years have elapsed since this South American country etched plurinationalism into its constitution, and despite the optimism this generated, the concrete effects have been virtually nonexistent. The agrarian and economic policies of the Correa administration, which favor large-scale economic development, isolate and marginalize the indigenous sector of the Ecuadorian nation.² State-led developmental projects, especially extraction endeavors, continue to strip indigenous communities of their rights to protected land.³ Finally, plurinationalism remains an undefined constitutional concept.⁴

1. Marc Becker, "Correa, Indigenous Movements, and the Writing of a New Constitution in Ecuador," *Latin American Perspectives* 38, no. 1 (2011): 47.

2. "Building a Plurinational Ecuador: Complications and Contradictions," *Socialism and Democracy* 26, no. 3 (2011): 72.

3. Ibid.

4. Georgetown University, "Republic of Ecuador Constituion of 2008," <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/Constitutions/Ecuador/english08.html>.

The unfulfilled promises of the 2008 Constitution have transformed this once momentous indigenous victory into a tale of the government successfully deceiving the indigenous masses. This essay aims to rectify this narrative by presenting the constitutional incorporation of plurinationalism in its intricate reality.

Literature Review

The ratification of the 2008 Constitution birthed a body of academic literature that has provided profound insight into the Ecuadorian indigenous movement and plurinationalism. However, the current works available to us do not apply a broader historical lens to this specific moment. For example, in “Correa, Indigenous Movements, and the Writing of a New Constitution in Ecuador” Marc Becker presents a narration of the events that occurred between 2006 and 2008 that led to the formation of a new constitution.⁵ Although this analysis enables us to understand how the constitutional incorporation of plurinationalism unfolded, it does not answer why it happened during this particular period. By failing to contextualize the 2008 Constitution within the broader historical relationship between the indigenous movement and the Ecuadorian presidency, this analysis, and the current body of literature at large, present an incomplete story of this realigning moment.

The absence of a broader historical framework and the shortcomings of the 2008 Constitution have also produced a narrative of manipulation. Andres Ortiz presents this perspective in “Taking Control of the Public Sphere by Manipulating Civil Society: The Citizen Revolution.” In this work, Ortiz argues that Rafael Correa secured his presidency by successfully manipulating the indigenous citizenry, *Confederación de Nacionalidades Indígenas* (CONAIE),

5. Becker, "Correa, Indigenous Movements, and the Writing of a New Constitution in Ecuador," 47-62.

and *Pachakutik* with the promise to transform Ecuador into a plurinational state.⁶ Academic discourses like this trivialize the political savviness of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement and ignore the complex historical factors that produced this watershed moment. More specifically, this work fails to account how the political climate produced by a decade of presidential overthrows caused this phenomenon to occur by uniting two forces with different agendas.

Theoretical Framework

This thesis reveals the mutualistic nature of the Correa-indigenous alliance by framing the push for a new constitution within the larger historical relationship between the indigenous movement and the Ecuadorian presidency. The trajectory of this relationship reveals how the three presidential overthrows between 1997 and 2005 forced President Correa into an electoral alliance with the indigenous movement in order to stabilize the nation and secure his tenure as president. It also sheds light to how the indigenous movement's partnership with Lucio Gutiérrez placed it in marginal political position during the 2006 presidential election and the 2007 Constitutional Assembly. In recognition of these realities, this thesis argues that the previous decade of presidential overthrows produced a political climate defined by instability that forged a mutualistic relationship between Rafael Correa and the indigenous movement during the push for a new constitution.

6. Andres Ortiz, "Taking Control of the Public Sphere by Manipulating Civil Society: The Citizen Revolution," *European Review of Latin American and Caribbean Studies*, no. 98 (2015): 29-48. In English CONAIE stands for the Confederation of Indigenous Nationalities in Ecuador. This is an umbrella organization of indigenous communities that primarily reside in the Amazon. Pachakutik is a political faction created by CONAIE. In this thesis, the indigenous movement refers to these two organizations.

CHAPTER I

THE INDIGENOUS MOVEMENT AND THE PRESIDENCY

The three presidential overthrows that occurred between 1997 and 2005 paved the road to plurinationalism by destabilizing the Ecuadorian government and producing an indigenous movement with extensive experience in presidential politics. Throughout this period, the movement played defining roles in the presidencies of Abdalá Bucaram, Jamil Mahuad, and Lucio Gutiérrez. This intimate relationship enabled the indigenous leaders to gain a profound understanding of presidential politics, and in the process, propelled Ecuador into chaos.

After the Caminata placed plurinationalism at the forefront of Ecuadorian politics, CONAIE created the *El Movimiento de la Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik-Nuevo Paíz* (The Pachakutik Plurinational Unity Movement) in 1996. The stated purpose of this political faction was to realize the principles of plurinationalism by making Ecuador's governmental institutions more democratic and diverse.⁷ The indigenous movement's entrance into formal politics did not end its grassroots efforts; rather, it created a political arm that worked in conjunction with active street movements to bring about change. This duality of external and internal forces made CONAIE and Pachakutik key players in the overthrows of presidents Abdalá Bucaram and Jamil Mahuad.

The indigenous movement first started directly influencing the presidency during Abdalá Bucaram's time in office. Between 1996 and 1998, Pachakutik made quantum leaps in embedding itself into the political system. In the 1996 presidential election, the new faction

7. Flavia Freidenberg and Manuel Alcantara Saez, "Movimiento Unidad Plurinacional Pachakutik – Nuevo País," *Flasco Andes* (1999): 239.

secured 20.6 percent of the national vote and sixty governmental appointments. Additionally, in the 1997 constituent election, Pachakutik earned ten percent of the seats.⁸ This permitted the political organization to incorporate the demands of indigenous people into the 1998 Constitutional Assembly. Outside of the convention, Pachakutik negotiated with other political parties to make CONAIE leader Nina Pacari the vice-president of the legislature.⁹ The indigenous movement's ability to establish itself politically enabled it to play a leading role in the overthrow of Abdalá Bucaram.

President Bucaram's time in office was characterized by corruption and his clash with the indigenous movement. During his presidency, he set in place a spoils system that secured his family and friends governmental positions. The indigenous movement's relentless critiques of the administration led to President Bucaram bribing Pachakutik leaders for their support.¹⁰ CONAIE responded by joining forces with labor organizations in order to stage massive protests on the streets of Quito. The resistance grew when President Bucaram unveiled his economic plan to increase the prices for electricity and gas, reform labor relations, and establish a timetable to dollarize the Ecuadorian currency.¹¹ This transformed the ongoing street manifestations into a powerful movement to remove President Abdalá Bucaram from office. Inside the legislature, Pachakutik formed a coalition with other political parties to increase pressure on the president. On February 1997, Abdalá Bucaram yielded to the external and internal forces that demanded his removal and his presidency ended.

8. Ibid.

9. Ibid., 241.

10. Leon Zamosc, "The Indian Movement and Political Democracy in Ecuador," *Latin American Politics and Society* 49, no. 3 (2007): 11.

11. Ibid.

The decade of instability continued with the Presidency of Jamil Mahuad. Immediately after Mahuad assumed office in 1998, the country fell into a debilitating economic crisis. In an effort to ameliorate the situation, President Mahuad announced his plan to dollarize the Ecuadorian economy and implement the austerity measures demanded by the International Monetary Fund. This caused indigenous activists under the leadership of CONAIE president Antonio Vargas to unify with military forces and advocate for yet another presidential overthrow.¹² On January 21, 2000, with a crowd protesting in Congress, the presidency of Mahuad officially ended.

The indigenous movement's direct role in overthrowing presidents Buccaram and Mahuad cemented a direct relationship between the Ecuadorian presidency and the movement. This relationship also propelled Ecuador into a state of political instability, as the country suffered two consecutive presidential overthrows. Although, uncertainty loomed over the highest office in the nation, at the start of the twentieth century, the indigenous movement was a potent political force in Ecuadorian politics. This changed in the years that followed.

In 2003, the indigenous movement formed an electoral coalition with Lucio Gutiérrez to secure the presidency. The successful election of Gutiérrez continued the decade of presidential instability when he abandoned his populist discourse in favor of austerity measures. However, this time the indigenous movement did not escape the controversy that plagued the presidency. In an effort to eliminate the nation's fiscal deficit, which inhibited the development of social projects that benefited indigenous sectors, the Pachakutik members in Gutiérrez's cabinet were complicit in the implementation of austerity measures.¹³ These measures included raising the prices for fuel, transportation and electricity, and a salary freeze in the public sector. In

12. Ibid., 12.

13. Ibid., 15.

response, CONAIE leaders publicly condemned the neoliberal policies of the president they helped elect. The indigenous-Gutiérrez alliance officially ended when Pachakutik refused to support a bill that modified labor contracts in the public sector, and the president consequently dismissed all Pachakutik ministers from the government.¹⁴ Although the coalition between the movement and President Gutiérrez disbanded, the indigenous movement's internal divisions continued to linger.

The failed alliance with Gutiérrez created an irreparable rift within the indigenous movement that curtailed its political influence. After CONAIE and Pachakutik abandoned the coalition, indigenous activists reproached the organizations for leaving while others condemned them for staying too long.¹⁵ These internal conflicts were further exasperated when President Gutiérrez appointed Antonio Vargas, a former CONAIE member, as the minister of social welfare in exchange for his allegiance.¹⁶ Antonio Vargas's appointment won the loyalty of a major sector of the indigenous sector, which created a sharp divide between indigenous activist who supported the president and those who did not. In addition to internal conflicts, the indigenous movement suffered a major setback when President Gutiérrez ended CONAIE's direct personnel appointments for state agencies that oversaw indigenous issues.¹⁷ This internal division, coupled with President Gutiérrez's political tactics, curtailed the indigenous movement's influence on the presidency. The inconsequential roles Pachakutik and CONAIE played in the ensuing impeachment efforts revealed this reality. After the fall out, the indigenous movement failed to unite its supporters under the goal of removing the

14. Ibid., 14.

15. "Indigenous Cabinet Members Walk Tightrope between Administration and Communities," *South American Political and Economic Affairs* February 13, 2003.

16. Zamosc, 14.

17. "Lucio Gutiérrez Gana Un "Round" a La Conaie," *Diario El Comercio* October 18, 2003.

president. As a result, CONAIE called off the two street manifestations it staged in 2004 because of low turnouts; supporters who sided with Gutiérrez refused to participate in the protests.¹⁸ It was only after President Gutiérrez dismissed Supreme Court justices in an effort to exonerate previous President Abdalá Buccaram, who had been charged with corruption, that Quito's middle class organized and successfully removed him from office.¹⁹ For the first time since 1997, the indigenous movement did not lead the street manifestations that resulted in the impeachment of an Ecuadorian president.

18. "President Lucio Gutiérrez Overcomes Impeachment Effort," *South American Political and Economic Affairs* November 19, 2004.

19. "Constitutional Crisis Erupts after President Lucio Gutiérrez and Parliament Remove Supreme Court," *South American Political and Economic Affairs* January 7, 2005.

CHAPTER II

THE ROAD TO THE 2008 CONSTITUTION

The 2006 Presidential Election

The previous decade of presidential overthrows defined the political landscape of the 2006 presidential election. In the race for a new president, the indigenous movement found itself in a marginal political position due to its association with the Gutiérrez presidency and its internal fragmentation. The political instability of the time also affected Rafael Correa by causing him to run on an anti-establishment platform that antagonized the traditional political powers. In the 2006 presidential elections, the political landscape presented all of the necessary conditions for an electoral alliance to form between Correa and the indigenous movement. However, this coalition never formed, and this reality directly undermines the narrative of manipulation.

The cloud of corruption and instability that haunted the Ecuadorian nation during the 2006 election determined the political positions of Rafael Correa and the indigenous movement. Despite the advancements made in the previous decade, the indigenous movement's failed alliance with Lucio Gutiérrez undermined its legitimacy and curtailed its influence. In 2006, the effects of this manifested themselves when CONAIE attempted to organize protests against a pending free trade deal. The indigenous movement's calls to action did not produce the same results that they once did as only a few indigenous communities participated, and the protests themselves were unorganized.²⁰ The previous decade also profoundly influenced Rafael Correa's political positions in the 2006 elections. The three impeachments between 1997 and

20. Luis Alberto and Tuaza Castro, "La Crisis Del Movimiento Indígena En Ecuador," *Flasco Andes*, no. 1 (2011).

2005 caused Correa to distance himself from the decadent government. Accordingly, he ran on an anti-government platform that promised the transformation of the Ecuadorian constitution, and with it, the government itself. By framing the creation of a new constitution as a transformative process that would end the traditional domination of self-interested political parties, Correa began a war with congress before he ever took office.

The instability of the Ecuadorian government further isolated Rafael Correa and heightened his need for political allies. As Simón Pachano revealed in “Reforma Electoral en Ecuador” (Electoral Reform in Ecuador), due to emergence of new social sectors, namely CONAIE and Pachakutik, the demands of political movements resulted in various reforms that focused on resolving immediate issues and did not consider the development of the political system itself. This weakened Ecuadorian political parties that in turn fostered hostility within the legislature and executive as politicians fought for their party’s existence.²¹ The decade of presidential overthrows and the political instability that followed produced a fertile ground for an alliance between Rafael Correa and the indigenous movement.

The indigenous movement’s refusal to form an electoral coalition with Rafael Correa in the 2006 presidential election reveals the mutualistic and strategic nature of the alliance that eventually formed in 2007. During his presidential campaign, Correa sought to join forces with the indigenous movement in an effort to secure the presidency. His aggressive discourse of governmental reform targeted the former supporters of CONAIE and Pachakutik.²² In a strategic plot to ensure their electoral support, Correa met with indigenous leaders to establish an official coalition.²³ Although Rafael Correa’s rhetoric of governmental reform won him

21. Simón Pachano, "Reforma Electoral En Ecuador," *Reformas Políticas en América Latina* (2008): 498.

22. Catherine Conaghan and Carlos de la Torre, "The Permanent Campaign of Rafael Correa: Making Ecuador’s Plebiscitary Presidency," *The International Journal of Press/Politics* 13, no. 3 (2008): 271.

23. "Pachakutik Va En Alianza; Rafael Correa Es Su Primera Opción," *Diario El Comercio*, April 29 2006.

support amongst members of Pachakutik and CONAIE, it failed to sway the indigenous movement into officially supporting his campaign. On May 22, 2006, COANIE and Pachakutik, in a united front, ended the possibility of an electoral coalition by nominating Luis Macas as their presidential candidate.²⁴ In an interview with *Diario El Comercio*, indigenous leaders cited their unwillingness to compromise the integrity of their indigenous campaign and their mistrust of Correa's intentions as the determining factors of their decision.²⁵

The indigenous movement's public mistrust of Rafael Correa and its refusal to enter an alliance with him severely undermines the narrative of manipulation. In a manipulative relationship, the deceiver must successfully secure the trust of the deceived. Rafael Correa failed to do this, and more importantly, he failed to convince the indigenous movement to support his campaign. By framing this failure within the political landscape of the 2006 presidential election, the narrative of manipulation that casts a shadow over this period falls to shambles. The platform Correa ran on echoed the demands indigenous movement had been making since the *Levantamiento* in 1990—he called for the end of neoliberal policies, the incorporation of the indigenous sector and the fundamental reform of the government to end the traditional domination of self-interested political parties. Furthermore, the fragmented state the indigenous movement found itself in undermined its legitimacy and caused it to lose its traditional electoral support. These factors effectively eliminated any opportunity of the indigenous movement winning the presidency. This meant Correa's coalition, at hindsight, presented an opportunity to further an indigenous agenda. But CONAIE's and Pachakutik's experience with presidential politics, specifically their failed coalition with President Gutiérrez, made them distrustful of Correa's rhetoric, as they made publically known. In the

24. "El Nexo Pachakutik – Correa, En Manos De Ecuatorunari," *Diario El Comercio*, May 6 2006.

25. Ibid.

2006 presidential election, the rhetoric of Correa did not sway the Pachakutik and CONAIE; rather, the indigenous movement stood its ground and waited for a more beneficial opportunity to present itself—and it did in 2007.

The National Referendum and the Constitutional Convention

Despite his inability to persuade the indigenous movement into joining his coalition, Rafael Correa ultimately won the presidency in 2006. Upon his entrance to office, Correa began a war with congress by fulfilling his promise of issuing an executive decree to hold a constituent assembly. In an effort to eliminate his opposition, the newly elected president amended his decree to grant the proposed assembly “full powers”.²⁶ If approved, this meant the assembly would have the unilateral ability to dissolve existing intuitions. However, before President Correa’s transformative plan of restructuring the Ecuadorian government could unfold, he needed to win the nation’s approval. This political context created another opportunity for an electoral coalition between Correa and the ingenious movement.

The second phase in the relations between President Rafael Correa and the indigenous movement produced different results. After the election of Correa in 2006, the movement strategically remained close to the president and his push for a new constitution. Pachakutik went as far as publically supporting Correa’s decree to hold a constituent assembly with unilateral powers. However, not all sectors of the indigenous movement approved of the decision. The insignificant role the indigenous movement occupied within the Correa administration made CONAIE skeptical of the new administration; Mónica Chuji, a member

26. Conaghan and de la Torre, 271.

of CONAIE, was the only indigenous person in the presidential cabinet.²⁷ Despite Correa's inclusive discourse and endorsement of plurinationalism, the indigenous movement did not have a direct influence on the new administration. This mistrust worsened when Correa proclaimed himself an indigenous person and consequently caused indigenous leaders to deem his support of plurinationalism and indigenous issues as mere pandering to further his own political agenda.²⁸ Despite these concerns, CONAIE and Pachakutik ultimately supported President Correa's push for a constituent convention. After publically endorsing the referendum, Pachakutik and CONAIE campaigned for its approval. Through public discourses and published articles, the indigenous movement framed the creation of a new constitution as an opportunity to incorporate indigenous demands, specifically plurinationalism.²⁹ The indigenous movement's campaigns were successful, and on September 28, with the crucial support of indigenous communities, the nation approved the referendum for a constituent assembly.

The ratification of the referendum was a victory for both President Correa and the indigenous movement. The election held for the 2007 Constituent Assembly resulted in Rafael Correa's political party winning eighty out of the one hundred and thirty seats in the assembly.³⁰ This, in addition to the full powers granted to the convention, allowed Correa to consolidate his power by using the constitution to reinstate the interventionist role of the state and remove his opposition in congress.³¹ In the case of the indigenous movement, the ratification of the referendum provided an opportunity to incorporate the demands of indigenous people into the

27. Alberto and Castro, 313.

28. "Pachakutik Se Reunió Ayer Con Correa," *Diario El Comercio*, January 23 2007.

29. Alberto and Castro, 313.

30. Conaghan and de la Torre, 274.

31. Ibid.

2008 Constitution. In the months leading assembly and during the assembly itself, the indigenous movement, primarily through Mónica Chuji, relentlessly demanded the incorporation of collective rights and plurinationalism into the 2008 Constitution.³² At the conclusion of the assembly, the voices of the indigenous movement proved effective as Ecuador etched plurinationalism into the nation's new charter.³³

The indigenous movement's role in the push for a new constitution further exhibited its political resourcefulness. In 2007 and 2008 the political context did not drastically change. The inability for CONAIE and Pachakutik to reach a consensus on whether to support Correa's push for a new constitution revealed that the indigenous movement was still in a state of fragmentation; and the insignificant role played in the Correa administration reflected its limited political influence. Nevertheless, the movement chose to form a momentary alliance to win the nation's approval for a new constitution. This was a calculated maneuver as the election of President Correa in 2006, without the support of CONAIE and Pachakutik, made it clear that the referendum could pass without their endorsement. In this scenario, the movement's demands for plurinationalism would not carry the same weight. Thus, President Correa did not court the indigenous movement—the indigenous movement chose to join his coalition only when it benefited it the most. As COANIE leader Humberto Cholango made clear, the momentary alliance with Rafael Correa served the primary purpose of ensuring that the indigenous movement reaped the seeds sown by those who marched before them.³⁴

32. Alberto and Castro, 313.

33. Georgetown University.

34. "Las Razones Qué Vamos a Votar Sí," *Diario El Comercio*, July 28 2008.

CONCLUSION

The incorporation of plurinationalism into the 2008 Constitution is a narrative of opportunity. By analyzing the failed attempts to form an electoral coalition within the context of the 2006 election, the narrative of manipulation starts to fall apart. The decade immediately before the presidential election placed COANIE and Pachakutik in a marginal political position, but it did not rob the indigenous movement of its extensive experience with presidential politics; its public skepticism of Rafael Correa during the presidential election made this clear. By revealing this element of distrust and highlighting the timely nature of the alliance that did form in 2007, this thesis accurately presented the indigenous movement's decision to support President Rafael Correa's push for a new constitution as calculative and beneficial maneuver.

In addition to unveiling the indigenous movement's political savviness, the application of a broader historical lens also brought to light the mutualistic character of Correa-indigenous alliance. The tentative union formed because of opportunity—not manipulation. Despite their marginal political position, CONAIE and Pachakutik used their extensive experience to capitalize on an opportunity. The inclusion of incorporating plurinationalism in the 2008 constitution was this opportunity. And to capitalize, the movement formed an alliance with Correa when it was most beneficial for it. In doing so, it transformed its disadvantaged position into one of power by leveraging its electoral support to ensure the inclusion of plurinationalism in the new constitution. This does not mean Correa's rhetoric was honest, but that it failed to seduce the movement into blindly supporting him. Considering the political landscape in 2007

and the events that unfolded, it becomes unquestionably clear that a narrative of manipulation does not capture the nuances of this moment.

By revealing the strategic nature of the indigenous movement's decision to support the creation of a new constitution, this essay raises two new questions. First, was the indigenous movement's involvement in the coalition ultimately beneficial to the indigenous people of Ecuador? By considering the lack of concrete effects plurinationalism has produced as a constitutional doctrine, the answer to this question seems straightforward. However, this question must be analyzed with the recognition that Rafael Correa had a viable opportunity to win the nation's support for a new constitution without the endorsement of the indigenous movement. In this scenario, the possibility exists that the movement would have failed to secure any form of victory with the creation of a new constitution. Finally, what concrete outcomes did the indigenous movement expect from the establishment of plurinationalism as a constitutional doctrine? The indigenous movement's profound understanding of the political system and its limitations, as unveiled in this essay, makes this inquiry especially interesting.

The story of the 2008 Ecuadorian Constitution serves as a stern reminder that progress is a process. The injustices the indigenous movement has fought against will not disappear overnight. This means that the 2008 Constitution's failure to bring about transformative change for the indigenous people of Ecuador does not invalidate it as an enormous victory. Therefore, to trivialize this accomplishment as a meaningless token diminishes the years of unwavering advocacy that made it possible; and perhaps more importantly, perpetuates the existence of a false narrative. However, these shortcomings are also important pieces to the larger story of plurinationalism in Ecuador that reveal that the fight is not over. In the sake of accuracy, this thesis thus strived to present the incorporation of plurinationalism into the 2008 Constitution in

its intricate reality to reveal how a narrative of manipulation does not capture the complexity of this watershed moment.

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